



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
DESERT TORTOISE RECOVERY OFFICE
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PROGRESS REPORT
April through June 2006

ACTIVITY	GOALS	PROGRESS/STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Range-wide Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct data analysis and report on monitoring conducted to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JUN 19: DTRO Monitoring Coordinator on board. MAY 31 – JUN 2: DTRO Coordinator and Monitoring Coordinator attended an Occupancy Estimation and Modeling Workshop for potential application to the monitoring program JUNE 29-30: Desert Tortoise Monitoring Committee (DTMC) meeting focused on 1) objectives for monitoring program based on prospective revisions of recovery criteria, feedback on summary report, and experience from 2001-05, and 2) plans for completion of summary report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 2001-05 summary report AUG 17, SEP 15: DTMC meetings for additional analyses and program review, clarify objectives of program, plan 2007 sampling
Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop MOU between DOD MDEP, Redlands University, & UNR to establish master database for desert tortoise data Develop protocols for structure, access, and maintenance of database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination and planning of the FWS-BLM-NPS project to develop a “Listed Species Consultation and Recovery Information Tracking System” is pending other workload and establishment of Monitoring Coordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue refining database concept Meet with relevant parties to identify roles in database development Finalize MOU
Science Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with recovery plan revision process Revise or develop new recovery criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAY 31 – JUN 2: Members of the SAC attended an Occupancy Estimation and Modeling Workshop for potential application to the desert tortoise recovery strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue developing recovery objectives/criteria; refine threat analysis process; identify research needs/recovery actions; integrate with regional working groups AUG 16: Members of the SAC will host a forum during the MOG meeting in Las Vegas to discuss draft recovery criteria with stakeholders and managers

Recovery Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Recovery Planning and Implementation Working Groups • Revise/amend Recovery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APR-JUN: USIECR and Center for Collaborative Policy continued stakeholder assessment interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUG 16: USIECR and CCP will discuss stakeholder assessment at MOG meeting in Las Vegas • Decision on whether or not to proceed with collaborative Regional Working Group process
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Other Activities

- The DTRO continues to coordinate with the Ft. Irwin Conservation/Mitigation Working Group (CMWG) on desert tortoise translocation prior to expansion of the National Training Center.
- The DTRO continues working with partners, including Clark County, in evaluating new roles and objectives for the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center (DTCC), to better integrate regional land management and desert tortoise research and recovery objectives, especially with regard to management of tortoises cleared from development and the best use of those tortoises for research and recovery purposes. A proposal to develop architectural designs for new facilities is under review.
- The DTRO continues as lead in recovery permit review, in coordination with the regional office and field offices. Revision of the programmatic biological opinion for desert tortoise recovery permit administration is in progress.
- The DTRO participates in the DMG Desert Tortoise Information and Education Project (DTI&E), focused on building public and stakeholder awareness of tortoise issues and tortoise recovery. The DTI&E Working Group is developing and implementing an education program that includes a media campaign, a Decision Makers Desert Tortoise Newsletter, webpage, education materials for teachers, and a public attitudes and effectiveness study, among other activities. The work group has coordinated with Clark County, Nevada, to expand the Mojave Max emergence contest to public schools in the state of California, and the first Mojave Max emergence contest was held in California 2006. The working group continues to seek funding to support these activities.
- On APR 18-19 the DTRO participated in a workshop on Native Plant Materials for Revegetation in the Mojave Desert, attended by over 250 land managers, natural resource specialists, land managers, private sector seed brokers and growers, and other individuals. Attendees heard from invited speakers about the challenges posed by wildfire and invasive plants to natural ecosystems of the Mojave Desert; an integrated approach to address similar challenges in the Great Basin, including a research program to develop adequate supplies of native plant materials for revegetation; and reports on current projects from researchers and restoration specialists. Participants also developed a general strategy to further the development of an ecoregion-based approach to increasing the supply and successful use of native plants in the Mojave Desert. The DTRO will continue to participate in this strategy.
- The DTRO participates in meetings with the FWS Ecological Services field offices and environmental groups to address concerns and issues in the California/Nevada Mojave and Colorado Desert regions.